

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph on page 4, beginning at line 1 with the following replacement paragraph:

-- (Amended) The general concept of magnetic separation using an automated mechanical force and a magnetic force is disclosed in commonly owned U.S. Patent 6,291,249 and U.S. patent application 09/261,068 filed Mar. 2, 1999, both of which are incorporated herein by reference. The drawing **Figure 1** depicts an exemplary container 100 having a flexible top sheet 102 laminated to a back sheet (not shown). The term "flexible" as used herein refers to a quality of material characterized in that the material can be deformed to a significant degree without destruction. For example, a soft plastic foil is considered flexible, while a hard plastic or glass plate is not considered flexible under the scope of this definition. A fluid receiving port 110 that receives the biological fluid is fluidly coupled to compartments 130 and 132, which are in turn fluidly coupled to separation chamber 160. Separation chamber 160 includes a plurality of magnetic beads 170, and at least some of the beads are coated with an affinity marker (not shown). Separation chamber 160 is further fluidly coupled to the following compartments: Compartment 140 (*e.g.*, containing wash fluid), compartment 150 (*e.g.*, containing elution fluid), compartment 142 (*e.g.*, for receiving waste fluid), compartment 152 (*e.g.*, for receiving eluted target antigen), and compartments 134 and 136. Compartments 134 and 136 are further fluidly coupled to fluid discharge port 120. Additional ports AP1 and AP2 are fluidly coupled to compartment 142 and 152, respectively, and allow draining of the fluid and/or target antigen from the compartments. --